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FEBRUARY

VOL.
3

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1870.

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VERONICA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

IN FIVE BOOKS.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VIII. CONFESSION.

HUGH did not communicate to his mother the fact of his interview with Mr. Frost until after his visit to Mr. Lovegrove's office, and he informed her of both circumstances at the same time. He could not refrain from saying a word about her having kept Mr. Frost's visit to Gower-street a secret from him.

"I was so surprised, mother," he said. "It seemed so unlike you. But I suppose he persuaded you in some way that it would be right not to mention his having come to our house."

"Was I bound to speak of it, Hugh—before Maud, too, and Mr. Levincourt?"

"No; of course not bound. But it would have seemed more natural if you had mentioned it quietly to me."

Mrs. Lockwood was silent.

"Look here, mother dear," said Hugh, after a short silence, "I am not good at hiding what I feel. I was a little hurt and vexed when Mr. Frost told me that you and he had privately discussed my feeling for Maud long before you had ever said a word to me on that subject. Now the truth is out!"

"He—Mr. Frost—told you that, Hugh?"

"Well, he did not say it verbatim et literatim as I have said it; but he certainly gave me to understand that such was the case."

"I meant for the best, Hugh."

"Meant for the best! Dearest mother, you don't suppose I doubt that? But

don't let that man come between you and me, mother dear."

"I thought you liked Mr. Frost, Hugh?"

"So I did. He was my father's friend. I have known him all my life. But lately there has been something about him that revolts—no, that is too strong a word—there has been something about him that seems to put me on my guard. I hate to have to be on my guard!"

"It is a very good attitude to face the world with."

"Ah, mother, you know we might have some discussion on that soon. But, at all events, it is not the posture I like—or, indeed, that I am able—to assume towards my friends. With mistrust affection vanishes."

Mrs. Lockwood winced and turned her pale face from her son.

"But, mother," he proceeded, "I have another piece of news to add—a disagreeable piece of news; but you must try not to take it too much to heart."

Then he told her of the disappointing letter he had received from Herbert Snowe. This, however, did not seem to grieve her so much as he had expected. In truth she could not help faintly hoping that it might give her anxieties a reprieve, by putting off yet awhile Hugh's endeavour to make a start for himself. But he did not leave her long in this delusion.

"I must try to borrow the money elsewhere," said he. "The opportunity of buying that connexion is too good a one to be lost without an effort."

"Did he not say something—did not Mr. Frost make you an offer of a desirable position elsewhere?" asked Mrs. Lockwood, hesitatingly.

"Oh, I suppose he mentioned that to you also during his mysterious visit? Well,

mother, I am not mysterious, and I was about to tell you that he did make me an offer on the part of this new company in which he is interested. But——"

"But you refused it!"

Hugh explained to his mother that in order not to appear obstinate and ungracious, he had taken two days to consider of the proposition. But he added that his mind was already made up on the subject.

"The truth is," he said, "that I mistrust the whole business. There are rumours afloat about the Company which would make a prudent man think twice before he had anything to do with it."

"But you would be a paid employé. You would run no risk."

"I should risk losing my time and getting neither cash nor credit."

"Is it really thought so ill of, this undertaking?"

"In our office it is spoken of as a very unsafe concern. My own opinion is this: if things had gone well in the English money market the Parthenope Embellishment *might* have turned up trumps. But it is all hazard—unprincipled gambling on a great scale, and with other folks' money! One or two more failures of great houses such as we have had lately would involve the company in ruin. But you need not look so anxious, dear little mother. Our unambitious little craft is out of such deep waters, and will keep out of them."

"Do you suppose, Hugh," asked Mrs. Lockwood in her usual deliberate calm tones, but with cheeks even paler than usual, "have you any reason for supposing that Mr. Frost has ventured money in this company?"

"*His own money* you mean?—for of course he has ventured other people's if he puffs the thing to every one as he did to me!—well, I cannot say. People are beginning to say that he is not so solid a man as was supposed. I hear—Heaven knows how these things get about—that he has a very extravagant wife, and that he has been rash in speculating;—mother, what is the matter?"

Hugh suddenly checked his speech to ask this question; for Mrs. Lockwood had dropped her head on her hands, and the tears were running down her face.

"Mother! Darling mother, do speak to me! For God's sake tell me what is the matter? Is it *my* fault? Have I done or said anything to vex you?"

She shook her head silently; but the

tears gathered and fell more quickly and copiously at every moment.

"Hugh," she faltered out at last, "I tried to do right."

"Tried to do right! You *have* done right—always right. You *are* the best woman in the world."

"Don't, Hugh! Don't talk so! It goes to my heart to hear you when I know how your tone would change if I were to tell you——"

"To tell me what?" asked Hugh, almost breathless with surprise and apprehension.

"Oh, Hugh, Hugh, you would not love me if I were to confess some great fault to you. You are like the rest of the men; your love is so mingled with pride!"

"Some great fault!" echoed Hugh.

"There! There it is, the stern look on your face like your father!"

The poor woman bowed her face yet lower, and hid it in her hands, while her delicate frame shook with sobs. For a few minutes, which seemed an interminable time to her, Hugh stood silent, and looking, as she had said, very stern. He was struggling with himself, and undergoing a painful ordeal which was not expressed in the set lines of his strong young face. At length he went to his mother, knelt beside her chair, and took her hand.

"Mother," he said, "nothing can blot out all the years of love and care and tenderness you have given to me. I cannot believe that you have been guilty of any great fault. Your sensitive conscience exaggerates its importance no doubt. But," here he made a little pause and went on with an effort, "but *whatever* it may be, if you will confide in me, I shall never cease to love you. You are my own dear mother! Nothing can alter that."

"Oh, my boy!" she cried, and threw her arms round his neck as he knelt beside her.

Then in a moment the weary secret of years came out. She told him all the truth, from the miserable story of her youth to the time of her marriage, and the subsequent persecution from which Mr. Frost had relieved her, and the price she had had to pay for that relief. As she spoke, holding her son in her arms and resting her head on his shoulder, she wondered at herself for having endured the torments of bearing her solitary burden all these years, and at the apprehension she had felt at the thought of the confession which now seemed so easy, sweet, and natural.

Hugh heard her without speaking, only now and then pressing the hand he held in his to give her courage when she faltered.

"Oh, mother, how you have suffered in your life!" That was his first thought when she ceased to speak. His next thought he was fain to utter, although it sounded like a reproach.

"If you had but trusted my father! He loved you so truly."

"Ah, Hugh, if I had! But it was so terrible to me to risk losing his love. And he often said—as you have been used to say after him—that he could never reinstate in his heart any one who had once been guilty of deliberate deception. You cannot know, you strong upright natures, how the weak are bent and warped. You cannot—or so I feared—make allowance for temptation, or give credit for all the hard struggle and combat that ends sometimes in defeat at last."

Hugh could not quite easily get over the revelation his mother had made. He had struggled with himself to be gentle with her. He would not add to her pain by look or gesture, if he could help it. But he knew that all was not as it had been between them. He knew that he could never again feel the absolute proud trust in his mother which had been a joy to him for so many years. Tenderness, gratitude, and pity remained. But the past was past, and irrevocable. The pain of this knowledge acted as a spur to his resentment against Mr. Frost.

"You have the paper acknowledging this man's debt to my father?" said Hugh. "It will not be difficult to make him disgorge. He to patronise me, and help me, and offer me this and that, when an act of common honesty would have put me in a position to help myself years ago!"

"Hugh, the dreadful idea that you hinted at, just now, has been in my mind for some time past, although I dared not dwell on it. I mean the fear that he may not be able to make immediate restitution of the money due to you."

"Restitution or exposure: I shall give him the choice, though I feel that even so I am in some degree compounding with knavery."

Mrs. Lockwood clasped and unclasped her hands nervously.

"He always found some excuse for putting me off all these years," she said.

"He shall not put me off, I promise him."

"Oh, my boy, if through my cowardice

you should lose all that your poor father worked so hard to bequeath to you!"

"We will hope better, mother dear. This man must have enough to pay me what he owes. It is a great deal to us, but not much to a rich man. He has been in a fine position for years, and the name of the firm stands high."

"And about—about the will, and Maud's inheritance?" stammered Mrs. Lockwood.

The calm security of her manner had given place to a timid hesitation in addressing Hugh, that was almost pathetic.

"Do not let us speak of that, dear mother," said Hugh, "or my choler will rise beyond my power to control it. That man is a consummate scoundrel. He was—I am sure of it now, I suspected it then—trying to sound me as to the probability of my being induced to bear false witness."

"Oh, Hugh!"

"He thought it might be highly convenient for him, and might ease his pocket and his cares (not his conscience; *that* he is not troubled with) if I—— It won't bear thinking of."

"May you not be mistaken? And may there not be some excuse——?"

"Excuse!" echoed Hugh.

His mother shrank back silently at the fierce tone of his voice. He walked to the door, and had almost passed out of the room, when she called him: but in so low and hesitating a tone that he stood uncertain whether she had spoken or not.

"Did you call me, mother?" he said.

"You never left me before without a word or a kiss, Hugh, since you were a toddling child."

He came back at once, and took her in his arms, and kissed her forehead fondly. But after he was gone, she sat and cried bitterly. A strange kind of repentance grew up in her mind; a repentance not so much for the evil done, as for the tardy confession of it. Yet it had seemed, so long as the confession was yet unspoken, and even while she was speaking it, as if it must take a load from her heart.

"If I had held my tongue," she thought, "my son would have loved me, and trusted me still. Now I am afraid to see him again, lest I should find some change in him, my boy whom I love better than my life! What signified the money? I might have let it go. He knew nothing of it, and he would not have grieved for it. What phantom of duty was it, that haunted and harried me into doing this thing?"

She forgot, in the present pain of her

mortified love and pride, all the miserable hours that secrecy had cost her. Her soul was tossed to and fro by many revulsions of feeling before her meditations were ended. The untoward teachings of her youth were bearing bitter fruit. She did not lack courage. She could endure, and had endured much, with fortitude and energy. But the greatness of Renunciation was not hers. She had balanced her sufferings against her faults, all her life long. She had been prone to demand strict justice for herself, and to think that she meted it out rigidly to others. There had been a secret sustaining consolation amid the heart-breaking troubles of her younger days, in the conviction that they were undeserved. Pride has always a balm for the sting of injustice. But for the stroke of merited calamity, humility alone brings healing.

Zillah thought that she had paid her price of suffering. She had faced the pain of confessing to her son that she had sinned. And yet the peace which that pain was meant to purchase, did not descend upon her heart. She had not learned even yet, that no human sacrifice can bribe the past to hide its face and be silent. We must learn to look upon the irrevocable without rancour: thus, and thus only, does its stern sphinx-face reveal to us a sweetness and a wisdom of its own.

CHAPTER IX. CONFIDENCE

It was past six o'clock on that same spring evening when Veronica's note was delivered at Gower-street. Hugh had just quitted his mother, after the interview recorded in the preceding chapter, and was crossing the little entrance hall when the messenger arrived.

"Are you Mr. Hugh Lockwood, sir?" asked the man. "I was told to give the letter into his own hands."

Hugh assured the messenger that he was right; and began to read the note as he stood there, with some anxiety. When he had glanced quickly through the note, he turned to the messenger.

"Are you to wait for an answer?" he said.

"No, sir; I had no instructions about that."

"Very good. I will send or bring the reply. Tell Lady Gale that her note has been safely received."

When the man was gone, Hugh ran up to his own room to read the letter again, and to consider its contents. What should he do? That he must tell Maud of it was

clear to him. He did not think he should be justified in withholding it from her. But how should he advise here to act? He cogitated for some time without coming to any conclusion; and at last went in search of her, determined to let himself be greatly guided by her manner of receiving that which he had to impart.

He found Maud in the little drawing-room that had been so long occupied by Lady Tallis. She was selecting and packing some music to take away with her; for she was to accompany her guardian to Shipley in two days. Mrs. Sheardown had invited her to stay at Lowater House for a while. But Maud had declared that she could not leave Mr. Levincourt for the first week or so of his return home. Afterwards she had promised to divide her time as nearly as might be between Lowater and the vicarage.

"What are you doing there, my own? You look as pale as a spirit in the twilight," said Hugh, entering the room.

"I am doing what spirits have no occasion for—packing up," she answered. "Luggage is, however, a condition of civilised mortality, against which it is vain to rebel."

"It is a condition of mortality which you of the gentler sex accept with great fortitude, I have always heard. Perhaps there may be something of the martyr-spirit, in the perseverance with which one sees women drag about piles of portmanteaus and bandboxes!"

He answered lightly and cheerfully, as she had spoken. But his heart sank at the prospect of so speedily parting with her.

"See, dear Hugh," said Maud, pointing to a packet of unbound music she had put aside, "these are to be left in your charge. The rest—Beethoven's sonatas, Haydn's, Hummel's, and a few of the songs I shall take with me. I have packed up the sonatas of Kozeluch that I used to play with Mr. Plew—poor Mr. Plew!"

She smiled, but a tear was in her eye, and her voice shook a little. Presently she went on. "I have chosen all the old things that uncle Charles is fond of. He said the other day that he never had any music now. Music was always one of his great pleasures."

"I have not heard you play or sing for some time, Maud."

"Not since—not since dear Aunt Hilda died. I have not cared to make music for my own sake. But I shall be thankful if I can cheer uncle Charles by it."

Hugh drew near her, and looked down

proudly on the golden-haired head bending over the music. "And must I lose you, my own love?" he said sadly.

"Lose me, Hugh! No; that you must not. Don't be too sorry, you poor boy. Remember how I shall be loving you, all the time—yes, all the time, every hour that we are parted."

She put up her hands on his shoulders, and laid her shining head against his breast with fond simplicity.

"Ah, my own, best darling! Always unselfish, always encouraging, always brave. What troubles can hurt me that leave me your love? My heart has no room for anything but gratitude when I think of you, Maud."

"Are there troubles, Hugh?" she asked, quickly, holding him away from her, and looking up into his face. "If you really think me brave, you will let me know the troubles. It is my right, you know."

"There are no troubles—no real troubles. But I will tell you everything, and take counsel of my wise little wife. First, I must tell you that I carried out our plan this day. Don't start, darling. I went to Mr. Lovegrove's office, where I found Mr. Simpson, the lawyer employed by—by the other side, and Lane, the agent. I told them what I had to say as briefly as possible, just as you bade me."

"Oh, I am so grateful to you, Hugh. And the result? Tell me in a word."

"I have no doubt Veronica's claim will be established. Indeed, I believe that it may be said to be so already."

"Thank God!"

"I will give you the details of my interview later, if you care to hear them. But, now, I have something else to say to you. Sit down by me here on the couch. I have just had a note—You tremble! Your little hands are cold! Maud, my darling, there is nothing to fear!"

"No, dear Hugh. I do not fear. I fear nothing as long as you hold my hand in yours. But I—I—"

"You have been agitated and excited too much lately. I know it, dearest. I hate to distress you. But I am sure it would not be right to conceal this thing from you."

"Thank you, Hugh."

"I got this note not half an hour ago. Can you see to read it by this light?"

She took the small perfumed note to the window, and read it through eagerly. Whilst she was reading Hugh kept silence, and watched her with tender anxiety. In

a minute she turned her face towards him and held out her hand.

"When may I go? You will take me, Hugh? Let us lose no time."

"You wish to go, then?"

"Wish to go! Oh, yes, yes, Hugh. Dear Hugh, you will not oppose it?"

"I will not oppose it, Maud, if you tell me, after a little reflection, that you seriously wish to go."

"I think I ought to see her."

"She does not deserve it of you."

"Dear Hugh, she has done wrong. She deceived her father, and was cruelly deceived in her turn. I know there is nothing so abominable to you as insincerity."

Hugh thought of his own many speeches to that effect, and then of his mother's recent revelation; and so thinking, he winced a little and turned away his head.

"You are accustomed to expect moral strength and rectitude from having the example of your mother always before your eyes. But ought we to set our faces against the weak who wish to return to the right?"

"I know not what proof of such a wish has been given by—Lady Gale."

"Dearest Hugh, if she were all heartless and selfish she would not long to see me in the hour of her triumph."

"She says no word of her father."

Maud's face fell a little, and she bent her head thoughtfully.

"Does that show much heart?" continued Hugh.

"Perhaps—I think—I do believe that she is more afraid of him than she is of me. And that would not be unnatural, Hugh. Listen, dear. I do not defend, nor even excuse, Veronica. But if, now—having seen to what misery, for herself and others, ambition, and vanity, and worldliness have led—she is wavering at a turning-point in her life where a kind hand, a loving word, may have power to strengthen her in better things, ought I not to give them to her if I can?"

"If," said Hugh, slowly, "you can do so without repugnance, without doing violence to your own feelings, perhaps—"

"I can! I can indeed, Hugh! Ah, you who have been blessed with a good and wise mother, cannot guess how much of what is faulty in Veronica is due to early indulgence. Poor Aunt Stella was kind, but she could neither guide nor rule such a nature as Veronica's. And then, Hugh—don't give me credit for more than I deserve—I do long to see her. She was my

sister for so many years. And I loved her—I have always loved her. Let me go!"

They debated when and how this was to be.

"I hate the idea of your going to see her unknown to Mr. Levincourt," said Hugh. "I believe he will be justly hurt and angered when he hears of it. If you have any influence with her, you must try to induce her to make some advances to her father. It is her barest duty. And—listen, my dearest," as he spoke he drew her fondly to his side as though to encourage her against the gravity of his words, and the serious resolution in his face. "Listen to me, Maud. You must make this lady understand that your path in life and hers will henceforward be widely different. It must be so. Were we to plan the contrary, circumstances would still be too strong for us. She will be rich. We, my Maudie, shall be only just not very poor. She will live in gay cities; we in an obscure provincial nook. The social atmosphere that will in all probability surround Lady Gale, would not suit my lily. And our climate would be too bleak for her."

"I will do what you tell me, Hugh. When may I go? To-night?"

"She says in her note that she will be at home all to-morrow."

"Yes; but she also says 'this evening.' And besides, to-morrow will be my last day with you!"

"Thanks, darling. Well, Maud, if you are prepared—if you are strong enough—we will go to-night."

Hugh went downstairs, and informed his mother that he and Maud were going out for awhile, but would return to supper.

It was not unusual for them to take an evening walk together, after the business of the day was over for Hugh.

"Are you going to the park, Hugh?" asked Mrs. Lockwood.

"No, mother."

At another time she would have questioned him further. But now there was a sore feeling at her heart which made her refrain. Was he growing less kind, less confiding already? Were these the first fruits of her miserable weakness in confessing what she might still have hidden? She was too proud, or too prudent—perhaps at the bottom of her heart too just—to show any temper or suspicion. She merely bade him see that Maud was well wrapped up, as the evenings were still chilly.

And then when the street door had closed

upon them, she sat and watched their progress down the long dreary street from behind the concealment of the wire blind in her little parlour, with a yearning sense of unhappiness.

Arrived at the bottom of the street, Hugh called a cab. "You must drive to the place, my pet," he said, putting Maud into the vehicle. "It is a long way; and you must not be tired or harassed when you reach the hotel."

"Oh, where is it, Hugh? How odd that I never thought of asking! But I put my hand into yours and come with you, much as a little child follows its nurse. Sometimes I feel—you won't laugh, Hugh?"

"I shall not laugh, Maudie. I am in no laughing mood. I may smile, perhaps. But smiles and tears are sometimes near akin, you know."

"Well, then, I feel very often when I am with you, as I have never felt with any one except my mother. I can remember the perfect security, the sense of repose and trust I had in her presence. I was so sure of her love. It came down like the dew from heaven. I needed to make no effort, to say no word. I was a tiny child when I lost her, but I have never forgotten that feeling. And since, since I have loved you, Hugh, it seems to me as though it had come back to me in all its peace and sweetness."

"My own treasure!"

They sat silent with their hands locked in each other's until they had nearly reached the place they were bound for. Then Hugh said: "We are nearly at our destination, Maud. I shall leave you after I have seen you safely in the hotel. It is now half-past seven. At nine o'clock I will come back for you. You will be ready?"

"Yes, Hugh."

"God bless you, my dearest. I shall be glad when this interview is over. My precious white lily, these sudden gusts and storms shake you too much!"

"Oh," she answered, smiling into his face, though with a trembling lip, "there are lilies of a tougher fibre than you think for! And they are elastic, the poor slight things. It is the strong stiff stubborn tree that gets broken."

"Am I stiff and stubborn, Maudie?"

"No; you are strong and good, and I am so grateful to you!"

He inquired in the hall of the hotel for Lady Gale, and found that directions had

been given to admit Maud whenever she might present herself.

"Miss Desmond?" said the porter. "Lady Gale begs you will go up-stairs. This way, if you please."

The man directed a waiter to conduct Miss Desmond to Lady Gale's apartment. Hugh gave her a hurried pressure of the hand, whispered, "At nine, Maud," and stood watching her until her slight figure had disappeared, passing lightly and noiselessly up the thickly-carpeted stairs.

PARIS IN 1830.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

As early as 1827 sagacious observers (including several English travellers) had seen symptoms of the approaching downfall of Charles the Tenth. In March, 1814, just as Louis the Eighteenth was setting his gouty feet on the beach at Calais, with a firm belief that Heaven was smiling graciously on his pury incompetence, Count d'Artois (afterwards Charles the Tenth) entered Vesoul, and once more treading on French earth, exclaimed: "At length I see my natal country again—that country which my ancestors governed in mildness. I will never quit it more." It remained from that time the firm belief of his shallow Chinese mind, that the Bourbons had never as yet governed with sufficient severity.

Sir A. B. Faulkner, an English gentleman, who visited Paris in 1827, wrote some observations on the times, which were literally prophecies. "Nothing but mischief can ensue," said this keen and thoughtful outside observer, "from M. Peyronnet's projects for trammelling the press. The insane abettors of this bill appear to have forgotten that they live in the nineteenth, not the sixteenth, century. The benefit of all history is thrown away upon them. It is thrown away upon them also, that England has experimentally proved that the liberty of the press is the best bulwark of our religion and our constitution, and the best means of enlightening men to appreciate the value of both. The fact is lost upon them, moreover, that there is no possible mode for governors getting at an acquaintance with the true interest of the governed, but through the free publication of opinion. If the minister cannot manage to carry his project by any other means, fair or foul, he has advised the king to create sixty new peers. Better (or I am far astray in my French politics), better,

Charles the Tenth, you had never left your quiet pension in Holyrood House!"

In August, 1829, the king dismissed M. Martignac's administration, because it would not go all lengths against the people, and appointed a crew of Jesuits and ultra-royalists, under the so-called guidance of his natural son, the rash and weak-minded Prince de Polignac.

In March, 1830, the king, in answer to a request from the Deputies to dismiss Polignac and the Jesuit ministers, haughtily dissolved the Chambers. The king was mad with the madness that the gods send upon men whom they have determined to destroy. On Sunday, July 25th, 1830, the king signed at St. Cloud three memorable ordinances, which were worthy of our Charles the First himself, and breathed the true spirit of absolute power. Number one abolished the freedom of the press. The second (each of these was a blow clenching the coffin-lid of monarchism) dissolved the chamber newly elected, and convoked for the third of August. The third abrogated the chief rights of the elective franchise. The ministers' report was signed by Polignac, Chantelauze, D'Haussez, Peyronnet, Montbel, Guernon Ranville, and Capelle. This mischievous and imbecile report denounced the press as exciting confusion in upright minds, and endeavouring to subjugate the sovereignty; and reviled it for pursuing religion and *its priests* with its poisoned darts. It accused the journals of ceaseless sedition, blasphemy, scandal, and licentiousness, and of exciting fermentation and fatal dissensions which might by degrees throw France back into barbarism. The public safety was endangered; strong and prompt repression was needed; and the last only argument was—cannon.

The perusal of Monday (26th July) morning's *Moniteur*, announcing these desperate and tyrannical ordinances, struck Paris like a stroke of lightning. Timid men ran off instantly, to see their brokers before the Rentes went down, or the frightened Bank stopped its discounts. Resistance was instantly threatened, and men's hands closed on invisible weapons. The Bourse was crowded to excess; on every face there was either stupefaction or alarm. Even Rothschild lost, by the headlong and sudden fall of the funds. Only one man looked rosy and jovial; he was the notorious jobber, Ardrard, who having been entrusted with the secret of the coup-d'état, made thousands by the fall.

The stormy petrels soon began to show.

M. Charles Dunyer, in a letter to the National, declared that government having violated its oaths, the duty of obedience had ceased, and that he for one would not pay taxes until the arbitrary ordinances were repealed. The National also issued a protest signed by the editors of the *Globe*, *Courrier des Electeurs*, *Courrier*, *Tribune des Départements*, *Constitutionnel*, *Temps*, *Courrier Français*, *Révolution*, *Journal du Commerce*, *Figaro*, *Journal de Paris*, and *Sylphe*, declaring they would all continue to publish without leave or licence from government. But next day some of the more timid constitutional journals applying for licences, were refused, and ceased to exist, while others appeared with blackened and defaced columns.

Thirty-two deputies met, on the Monday, at the house of M. Lafitte, the banker; and many of the constitutional peers met at the Duke de Choiseul's. At both meetings resistance was proposed. The king, refusing to receive the peers' protest, forty couriers were instantly sent to the towns and villages within one hundred miles of Paris, to urge the co-operation of the inhabitants with the inhabitants of the metropolis. In the mean time the king and the Jesuits were not idle. Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, was entrusted with the command of Paris; general officers were sent to Grenelle and Angers; and troops were ordered in from all the barracks fifty miles round. The guards in the city were doubled, and towards the evening bodies of the gendarmerie were stationed about the Bourse and on the Boulevards. The Bank refusing to discount bills, many of the great manufacturers, who felt this to be a proof of want of confidence in the government, at once discharged their workmen, who instantly thronged the streets. Most of the journals on their way to the provinces, containing the obnoxious ordinances, were stopped at the central post-office; and M. Mangin, the detested prefect of police, issued an ordinance on the Monday evening, forbidding the circulation of anonymous writings, and threatening instant prosecution of all proprietors of reading-rooms and cafés who bought or circulated journals printed contrary to Polignac's ordinance. The police, acting on this tyrannical decree, instantly closed almost every café and reading-room, and nearly all the theatres. The Parisian, deprived of his petit journal and his comédie, at one fell swoop, was now ready for any desperate act. Government spies infested every

street. The passport offices were crowded by alarmed foreigners; revolutionary songs were forbidden to be sung in the Champs Elysées by the agents of the police. Yet the storm gathered fast. Shops and public buildings were shut earlier than usual. Young men of the tradesmen class paraded the streets with sword-sticks, shouting, "Vive la charte!" Towards night, better dressed men joined them armed with sword-sticks and pistols. Crowds of artisans with bludgeons, rushed along vociferating "Vive la Liberté!" under the windows of the Treasury, at Polignac's hotel, at the Palais Royal, and outside the hotel of Montbel, the Minister of Finance, in the Rue de Rivoli. Charles the Tenth came privately to Paris from a shooting party of several days' duration at St. Cloud, and slept at the Duchess de Berri's. The leaders of the coming revolution spent the night in grave deliberation.

On the Tuesday (July 27) M. Mangin issued an ordinance, describing certain vague outrages committed in Paris by a seditious mob, and ordering citizens to avoid the wretches, to remain in their dwellings "with prudence and good sense," and at night to place lights in their windows. This day the *Constitutionnel* (seventeen thousand subscribers) was suppressed by the police, and a sentry was placed at the office door, to prevent the distribution of the already printed copies. At mid-day the guards were under arms in the Champs Elysées: while angry men, mounted on chairs, or leaning from windows, read inflammatory papers to the people. Every manufactory was closed, and before one all the shops shut, while troops of gendarmes patrolled at full gallop to disperse the gathering and feverish mob. Troops came pouring in with fixed bayonets. The king was at the Tuileries. In the Place Caroussel there were several thousand soldiers, with the lancers of the Royal Guard, and a great many cannon. At the Place Vendôme a strong guard of infantry was placed to protect the column with its badges of royalty from being defaced. The surrounding crowds menaced the troops, and shouted, "Vive la charte!"—"Down with the absolute king!" About four o'clock the gendarmes charged the people in the Palais Royal, drove them out pell-mell with the flats of their sabres, and closed the gates. The storm had begun to break. About five o'clock six or seven young men with sticks tried to stop and disarm a mounted gendarme, who

was carrying a despatch. A platoon of infantry fired a volley, in order to rescue him, the people then dispersed, and let the scared orderly return to his post, but a gendarme was killed by the people. About seven o'clock bands of discharged workmen flocked into Paris from the banlieue, and gave a fresh physical impulse to the rising.

Armourers' shops were instantly broken open and stripped. The Rue St. Honoré was unpaved as far as the Rue de l'Echelle, and two large waggons were overturned in the narrowest part of the street. Some squadrons of lancers charged and dispersed the mob of the Rue St. Honoré, while battalions of the Royal Guard fired up the Rue de l'Echelle and at the church of St. Roche. It being announced in such theatres as were open that the military were firing on the people, the audiences instantly rushed out to join their brethren. The ropes of the street lanterns were cut, and the lanterns were trodden under foot. Some of the people having fallen, a party of artisans bore one of their dead companions through the Rue Vivienne crying "Vengeance! vengeance!" especially as they passed a Swiss post in the Rue Colbert. The blood-stained body was exhibited, stripped, and surrounded by candles, in the Place de la Bourse; the mob shouting savagely the whole time "To arms, to arms!" Several respectable tradesmen now began to appear in the uniform of the disbanded National Guard. They were protected from the prowling gendarmerie, and received with shouts of rapturous welcome. Some of the king's troops left their barracks and joined the revolutionists. At half-past seven in the evening, several young men rushed through the Palais Royal distributing profusely, gratis, copies of *Le Temps*, *Le National*, and *Figaro*. Those who got the copies instantly read them to silent and intent groups. Before this, soldiers had broken into the National office, in the Rue St. Marc, had carried the editor to prison, seized the types, and blockaded the street. The office of the *Temps*, in the Rue Richelieu, was also broken open. At ten o'clock a guard-house of the gendarmes at the Place de la Bourse was attacked, the guard was expelled, and the place was set on fire.

In the course of the evening, Polignac returned to his hotel, strongly guarded by soldiers, and gave a grand dinner to his odious colleagues, under the protection of a battalion and ten pieces of artillery. Despatches were sent to hurry up more troops to the capital, but several of the depart-

ments were already in arms. The Deputies had met and resolved on instantly reorganising the National Guard, and on resistance to the death. A stern manifesto, signed by "the preparatory re-union of free Frenchmen," had also appeared in several journals, declaring Charles the Tenth out of law, and therefore dethroned: the six ministers being pronounced attainted traitors.

On Wednesday, the volcano indeed burst. The shops from early morning were shut and the windows were barred. The tocsin sounded continuously and people flocked in from every faubourg eager for fight. Handbills and revolutionary placards were in every hand, and on every wall. A busy organisation had gone on during the night; more arms were seized and distributed, and small parties of the military were stopped, disarmed, and imprisoned. Vehicles were forbidden in the streets. The cries were:

"Down with the Jesuits! Down with the Bourbons! Death to the Ministers!"

The poorer insurgents who could not obtain swords, muskets, or pistols, tied knives or any cutting instruments, to long poles. Barricades began to rise as if by enchantment. Tri-coloured flags waved in the streets, and nearly every one wore tri-coloured cockades or breast-knots. Still the fool Polignac, girdled with cannon, said to his Jesuits: "Our plan is settled; the rest must be left to the gendarmerie; all this is nothing; in two hours everything will be quiet."

Quiet, indeed! Death is quiet. The telegraphs, including that on the church of the Petits Pères, were dismounted. The people had now defaced almost every defaceable emblem of royalty and burnt many of the movable escutcheons of Charles the Tenth in the Place Publique. A red flag already waved over the Porte St. Denis. On this day, also, a protest appeared, signed by nearly all the Deputies, refusing to consider the dissolution of the Chamber legal. Amid the incessant fire of musketry (for random fighting had now become universal), the following eminent Deputies, General Gerard, Count Lobau, Lafitte, Cassinac, Perrier and Mangin, went to the Duke de Ragusa, and begged him to withdraw his soldiers.

"The honour of a soldier is obedience," the marshal replied: like a Frenchman who thought himself speaking historically.

"And civil honour," replied M. Lafitte, "does not consist in massacring citizens."

The Deputies demanded the revocation of the illegal ordinances. The marshal re-

ferred these terms to Polignac, who at once declared that such conditions rendered any conference useless.

"We have, then, civil war," said M. Lafitte. The marshal bowed, and the Deputies retired.

War now began in earnest. The drums of the National Guard beat "to arms." The tocsin clanged incessantly, and roused the people to madness. At about two o'clock, a cannon on the bridge near the *Marché aux Fleurs* raked the quay with grape-shot; the people then advanced with fury, and several of the guards fell, and others were led off wounded.

A studious, abstracted-looking person, quietly walking along the quay, with folded arms, was struck dead by a bullet from the opposite side of the *Seine*. At the corner of an adjoining street, an old man lay, with his back leaning against a wall, apparently asleep in the midst of the incessant rattle of musketry; but he was dead, and the blood was bubbling up from a shot-hole in his lungs. There was tremendous fighting at the *Halles*, in the *Rue St. Denis*, where the Royal Guard, strongly posted, were besieged. The people threw up barricades at every outlet, and from behind these impromptu ramparts, from the corners of the abutting streets, and from every adjacent window, blazed furiously and unceasingly at the troops. There was severe fighting, too, in the *Rue St. Honoré*, opposite the *Palais Royal*: while at the *Place de Grève*, the Swiss guards were repulsed with great loss. At the *Portes St. Denis* and *St. Martin*, on the quays, all along the boulevards, and at the *Place Vendôme*, the slaughter was prodigious. In the *Rue Montmartre*, Marmont himself headed the attack. Collecting his troops in the *Place des Victoires*, the Marshal charged down the *Rues de Mail des Fossés*, *Croix des Petits Champs*, and the *Rue Neuve des Petits Champs*. He then scoured the *Rue Montmartre* as far as the *Rue Joquelet*, where the people stood at bay, and every house was turned into a fortress. Black flags waved from several edifices. In the *Place de Grève*, thousands of people fired at the Swiss. There was firing even from the windows of the *Louvre*. The soldiers in the *Rue Marché St. Honoré* shot down many innocent and unarmed people. The *Place Louis the Sixteenth* was crowded with troops of all arms, from *Versailles*. A strong park of artillery was placed in position along the garden front of the *Tuileries*: the cavalry, dismounted,

standing by their horses' heads. A party of *Polytechnique* students mounted guard, and protected the General Post-office, in the *Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau*. In the *Place Vendôme*, General Gerard and two regiments of the line joined the people: who, shouting, "Brave General Gerard, we will never forsake you!" and charging the troops, routed them on the first onslaught, and took possession of their ammunition. At the *Porte St. Martin*, the women and children unpaved the streets, and carried up the stones to the roofs of their houses, in order to drop them on the military. In the *Rue St. Denis*, the people captured (to their extravagant delight) two pieces of cannon. The Swiss were everywhere cut to pieces.

At the *Hôtel de Ville*, the attack was especially furious and determined. Lads from the *Polytechnique* fought with the foremost, and brought powder for the people. After losing about seven hundred men, the insurgents at last poured into the building, and fought, foot to foot and hand to hand, with the Swiss until they won every room; but more lancers, Royal Guards, gendarmes, and artillery, arriving, the people were defeated, and the *Hôtel de Ville* was again taken by the Royalists. General *Lafayette* now placed himself at the head of thirty thousand National Guards, who had collected, and advanced with six pieces of cannon. Eight hundred Royal Guards and Swiss, driven from the *Hôtel de Ville* by the ceaseless fire from every window in the *Place*, retreated along the quay, sullenly keeping up a deadly file and platoon fire as they retrograded, until, joined by fresh Swiss and guards, one hundred cuirassiers and four pieces of flying artillery, they again advanced to recover the *Hôtel de Ville*. The cannon loaded with canister produced a terrible carnage. The dead men lay in heaps. The patriots fell back for a time down the *Rues de Matroît* and *du Mouton*, and the Royalists were a second time masters of the blood-stained *Hôtel de Ville*; but the people shouting "*Vive la Liberté*," "*Vive la Charte*," broke again, like a thunderstorm, upon the building. Driven back by the furious and repeated charges of the cuirassiers, the insurgents would perhaps have been routed for a time, but for one act of devoted and patriotic courage. A brave lad waving a tri-coloured flag near the suspension bridge, at the *Place de Grève*, suddenly shouted: "If we must cross this bridge, I will set the example. If I die, remember my name is *Arcole*!"

He then advanced under a hot fire, and placed a ladder against the façade of a pillar on the Grève side. The lad's courage reanimated the citizens, and they returned at once to the charge; but, at the first volley of the Swiss, the poor boy rolled off the ladder, dead, into the Seine. Forgetting everything at that sight, the people, screaming with rage, rushed forward, drove back the troops, and turned their own cannon upon them. Several hundred horse and guards were slain. The people had already lost twelve hundred, killed or wounded.

In every street where soldiers were likely to come, the old men and children hammered the paving-stones into missiles, and prepared bottles and flower-pots to throw down upon the gendarmes. The gates and doors were always thrown open, to shelter the people when the cavalry charged. The tradesmen's daughters cast and distributed bullets, or attended the wounded. The Bourse was turned into a prison for captured soldiers, and many small parties of Swiss disarmed by the crowds who compelled them to throw them their muskets, were then good-naturedly marched off to the Bourse: a long loaf being thrust under the arm of each prisoner. The Polytechnique lads directed all the evolutions, and drilled the people during the lulls in the fighting. When the bridges were raked by the cannon the people retreated to the colonnades, and enfiladed the regiments as they crowded over the captured bridges. By this time the houses at the corner of the Quai Pelletier and the Place de Grève were riddled, chipped, and starred with bullets, and the corners and fronts were destroyed. At the end of the Rue St. Denis, the people made a bonfire of the window-shutters of the printer of a court paper. Whenever a middle-aged bourgeois appeared in the old blue uniform with the red facings, the stained belt, and rusty firelock, of the old National Guard, he was loudly cheered.

When the fifth regiment stationed on the boulevard was ordered to "make ready," they obeyed the order; but, on the cry "present," they turned their muskets on the colonel, coolly waiting for the word "fire." The colonel instantly broke his sword across his knee, tore off his epaulettes, and retired. The delighted people threw themselves into the arms of the soldiers, and embraced them, shouting, "Vive la Ligne!" When the cavalry of the Guard charged for the first time, an officer at the

head of a squadron, with tears in his eyes, cried to the people:

"In the name of Heaven, and for the love of God, go back to your houses!"

The gardes du corps, when ordered to fire at the mob, from the windows of their hotel on the Quai d'Orsai, evidently aimed above the heads of the people; for no one was wounded. In the streets, the soldiers of the line stood gloomy and complaining. The officers looked pensive and uneasy, and at every louder volley shrugged their shoulders and cast up their eyes. The Swiss posted themselves at the corners of the streets, out of reach of the bullets; and, advancing by turns, fired down the road at every one they saw. The people fired from every loop of vantage. Many of the cuirassiers were dreadfully burnt by aquafortis and vitriol, thrown on them by the women from the upper windows. The lancers of the Guard, who had been peculiarly ferocious, were specially obnoxious to the people.

Several women fought in the mob and displayed great courage. As for the boys, they were to the front as usual. One boy, quietly waited with folded arms for a fierce officer of the lancers who rode at him; and the moment the officer came up, the boy shot him dead. Another lad, at the approach of some gendarmes, dived under the foremost horse, and, coming up to the surface again, turned and shot the rider. A third boy (a mere child) crept under the horses of a troop of cavalry until he found room to rise between two dragoons; he then emerged with a pistol in each hand, stretched out his arms, and brought to the ground his right and left enemy. A Blouse, in a snug corner at a barricade in the Rue Richelieu, discharged his rifle eighteen times at a close column of Swiss. Eighteen times he killed his man, and then retired, apparently for want of cartridges. Among French insurgents, there is, of course, always a large percentage of retired soldiers.

M. Staffel, a bootmaker, in the Passage du Teumon, with others, disarmed and saved ten men of the Royal Guard, who would have been massacred. M. Gorgot, an old grenadier, an ancient director of military, in the street St. Germaine l'Auxerrois, seeing a young man of the faubourgs awkward with his musket, begged the use of it for a moment, and, keeping behind a corner of the Café Secrétaire, fired on a column of Swiss that were debouching upon the Place de Châtelet. A Swiss fell. The whole column fired in return at Gorgot,

but with no result. He fired again, and another Swiss fell. About sixty armed citizens then discharged their pieces, and the Swiss column, panic-struck, wheeled round and retired in disorder, leaving the place strewn with dead. At the Rue Planche-Mibray, a brave Blouse, noticing that the steady fire of a single cannon was causing a cruel carnage, cried out "Who will come with me and take that piece? I will only have men who are unarmed." He rushed forward, followed by eight or ten men; but a bullet struck him when he had nearly reached the gun. He was taken to a temporary hospital at the house of a commissary of police. When the ball was extracted, he cried to his comrades:

"Cowards, you abandoned me just when the cannon would have been ours. Follow me, and repair your disgrace!"

He went out again, faced the fire, and in five minutes the gun was in the hands of the people. Twelve hours afterwards, he expired, within a few paces of the spot where he had fought.

The whole of that night the people toiled at throwing up fresh barricades; the walls were built breast high, were four or five feet thick, and they were generally about fifty paces apart. Hundreds of the finest trees in the boulevards were cut down for these barricades; hackney and stage coaches filled up the gaps; and even the great iron gates of the Palais de Justice were taken down and thrown on the heaps. The cafés were shut and barred, and every lamp was extinguished. There was, everywhere, a terrible sense of stern preparation for the morrow.

CHANT OF STORM WINDS.

COME, brothers, come; haste o'er the sea
Lashing its waves to foam;
An army of bodiless spirits are we,

Ever through space we roam;
Ever, ever, pausing never,
Sweeping onward, ever, ever!

Up go the waves, up to the skies,
Clouds seud over the moon,
Down, down sink the billows, and up again rise,
With wild and angry tune;
Restless ever, pausing never,
Madly surging, ever, ever!

Mark as we rush, huge vessels reel
Quiv'ring like paper boats,
The stout ship may shudder from capstan to keel,
Care we if she sinks or floats!
Ever, ever, pausing never,
Fateful brothers we are ever!

The helmsman feels our blinding hair,
Drifting across his face,
But he sees not the talons that rive and tear
In our destructive chase;
Pressing onwards, pausing never,
Felt though viewless, ever, ever!

We snap the cordage, rend the mast,
Flapping to shreds each sail,
Till the mariner sobs to the sobbing blast

From a wreck before the gale;
Fiercely flying, pausing never,
Swooping landwards, onwards ever!

Earth hears the rushing of our wings,
And trembles as we pass;
For we crush the pride of material things
As men's feet crush the grass;
Restless ever, pausing never,
Storm Winds, weird and mighty ever!

Titanic trees we rend in twain,
Whirl rocks like flakes of snow,
Swirl mortals like notes in our mad hurricane,
And castles like cards o'erthrow;

Ever, ever, pausing never,
Potent spirits, dreaded ever!

Sin shudders at our voices wild,
As we rush howling past;
Men stalwart and burly whom guilt hath defiled
Crouch 'neath the searching blast;

Piercing ever, pausing never,
Slumb'ring conscience rousing ever!

Lost spirits, agonised with pain,
To our earth-bound brothers,
Shrieking this summons to join our wild train
"Ye are ours and we Another's."

Ever, ever, pausing never,
Calling souls to us for ever!

Storm spirits, working wreck and woe,
With devastating breath,
Our ban may bring blessing we never may know,
Though hand in hand with death;
Ever, 'spite our fierce endeavour,
To His will subdued for ever!

On, brothers, on; with wings unfurled;
Dreaded, not understood;
We are driving pestilence out of the world,
Working not ill but good;
Ever, 'spite our fierce endeavour,
God's own ministers for ever!

THE CHILD THAT WENT WITH THE FAIRIES.

EASTWARD of the old city of Limerick, about ten Irish miles, under the range of mountains known as the Slieveelim hills, famous as having afforded Sarsfield a shelter among their rocks and hollows, when he crossed them in his gallant descent upon the cannon and ammunition of King William, on its way to the beleaguering army, there runs a very old and narrow road. It connects the Limerick road to Tipperary with the old road from Limerick to Dublin, and runs by bog and pasture, hill and hollow, straw-thatched village, and roofless castle, not far from twenty miles.

Skirting the heathy mountains of which I have spoken, at one part it becomes singularly lonely. For more than three Irish miles it traverses a deserted country. A wide, black bog, level as a lake, skirted with copse, spreads at the left, as you journey northward, and the long and irregular line of mountain rises at the right,

clothed in heath, broken with lines of grey rock that resemble the bold and irregular outlines of fortifications, and riven with many a gully, expanding here and there into rocky and wooded glens, which open as they approach the road.

A scanty pasturage, on which browsed a few scattered sheep or kine, skirts this solitary road for some miles, and under shelter of a hillock, and of two or three great ash-trees, stood, not many years ago, the little thatched cabin of a widow named Mary Ryan.

Poor was this widow in a land of poverty. The thatch had acquired the grey tint and sunken outlines, that show how the alternations of rain and sun have told upon that perishable shelter.

But whatever other dangers threatened, there was one well provided against by the care of other times. Round the cabin stood half a dozen mountain ashes, as the rowans, inimical to witches, are there called. On the worn planks of the door were nailed two horse-shoes, and over the lintel and spreading along the thatch, grew, luxuriant, patches of that ancient cure for many maladies, and prophylactic against the machinations of the evil one, the house-leek. Descending into the doorway, in the chiar' oscuro of the interior, when your eye grew sufficiently accustomed to that dim light, you might discover, hanging at the head of the widow's wooden-roofed bed, her beads and a phial of holy water.

Here certainly were defences and bulwarks against the intrusion of that unearthly and evil power, of whose vicinity this solitary family were constantly reminded by the outline of Lisnavoura, that lonely hill-haunt of the "Good people," as the fairies are called euphemistically, whose strangely dome-like summit rose not half a mile away, looking like an outwork of the long line of mountain that sweeps by it.

It was at the fall of the leaf, and an autumnal sunset threw the lengthening shadow of haunted Lisnavoura, close in front of the solitary little cabin, over the undulating slopes and sides of Slieveelim. The birds were singing among the branches in the thinning leaves of the melancholy ash-trees that grow at the roadside in front of the door. The widow's three younger children were playing on the road, and their voices mingled with the evening song of the birds. Their elder sister, Nell, was "within in the house," as their phrase is, seeing after the boiling of the potatoes for supper.

Their mother had gone down to the bog, to carry up a hamper of turf on her back. It is, or was at least, a charitable custom—and if not disused, long may it continue—for the wealthier people when cutting their turf and stacking it in the bog, to make a smaller stack for the behoof of the poor, who were welcome to take from it so long as it lasted, and thus the potato pot was kept boiling, and the hearth warm that would have been cold enough but for that good-natured bounty, through wintry months.

Moll Ryan trudged up the steep "bohereen" whose banks were overgrown with thorn and brambles, and stooping under her burden, re-entered her door, where her dark-haired daughter Nell met her with a welcome, and relieved her of the hamper.

Moll Ryan looked round with a sigh of relief, and drying her forehead, uttered the Munster ejaculation:

"Eiah, wisha! It's tired I am with it, God bless it. And where's the crathurs, Nell?"

"Playin' out on the road, mother; didn't ye see them and you comin' up?"

"No; there was no one before me on the road," she said, uneasily; "not a soul, Nell; and why didn't ye keep an eye on them?"

"Well, they're in the haggard, playin' there, or round by the back o' the house. Will I call them in?"

"Do so, good girl, in the name o' God. The hens is comin' home, see, and the sun was just down over Knockdoulah, an' I comin' up."

So out ran tall, dark-haired Nell, and standing on the road, looked up and down it; but not a sign of her two little brothers, Con and Bill, or her little sister, Peg, could she see. She called them; but no answer came from the little haggard, fenced with straggling bushes. She listened, but the sound of their voices was missing. Over the stile, and behind the house she ran—but there all was silent and deserted.

She looked down toward the bog, as far as she could see; but they did not appear. Again she listened—but in vain. At first she had felt angry, but now a different feeling overcame her, and she grew pale. With an undefined boding she looked toward the heathy boss of Lisnavoura, now darkening into the deepest purple against the flaming sky of sunset.

Again she listened with a sinking heart, and heard nothing but the farewell twitter and whistle of the birds in the bushes

around. How many stories had she listened to by the winter hearth, of children stolen by the fairies, at nightfall, in lonely places! With this fear she knew her mother was haunted.

No one in the country round gathered her little flock about her so early as this frightened widow, and no door "in the seven parishes" was barred so early.

Sufficiently fearful, as all young people in that part of the world are of such dreaded and subtle agents, Nell was even more than usually afraid of them, for her terrors were infected and redoubled by her mother's. She was looking towards Lisnavoura in a trance of fear, and crossed herself again and again, and whispered prayer after prayer. She was interrupted by her mother's voice on the road calling her loudly. She answered, and ran round to the front of the cabin, where she found her standing.

"And where in the world's the craythurs—did ye see sight o' them anywhere?" cried Mrs. Ryan, as the girl came over the stile.

"Arrah! mother, 'tis only what they're run down the road a bit. We'll see them this minute, coming back. It's like goats they are, climbin' here and runnin' there; an' if I had them here, in my hand, maybe I wouldn't give them a hiding all round."

"May the Lord forgive you, Nell! the childhens gone. They're took, and not a soul near us, and father Tom three miles away! And what'll I do, or who's to help us this night? Oh, wirristhru, wirristhru! The craythurs is gone!"

"Whisht, mother, be aisy: don't ye see them comin' up."

And then she shouted in menacing accents, waving her arm, and beckoning the children, who were seen approaching on the road, which some little way off made a slight dip, which had concealed them. They were approaching from the westward, and from the direction of the dreaded hill of Lisnavoura.

But there were only two of the children, and one of them, the little girl, was crying. Their mother and sister hurried forward to meet them, more alarmed than ever.

"Where is Billy—where is he?" cried the mother, nearly breathless, so soon as she was within hearing.

"He's gone—they took him away; but they said he'll come back again," answered little Con, with the dark brown hair.

"He's gone away with the grand ladies," blubbered the little girl.

"What ladies—where? Oh, Leum,

asthora! My darlin', are you gone away at last? Where is he? Who took him? What ladies are you talkin' about? What way did he go?" she cried in distraction.

"I couldn't see where he went, mother; 'twas like as if he was going to Lisnavoura."

With a wild exclamation the distracted woman ran on towards the hill alone, clapping her hands, and crying aloud the name of her lost child.

Scared and horrified, Nell, not daring to follow, gazed after her, and burst into tears; and the other children raised high their lamentations in shrilly rivalry.

Twilight was deepening. It was long past the time when they were usually barred securely within their habitation. Nell led the younger children into the cabin, and made them sit down by the turf fire, while she stood in the open door, watching in great fear for the return of her mother.

After a long while they did see their mother return. She came in and sat down by the fire, and cried as if her heart would break.

"Will I bar the doore, mother?" asked Nell.

"Ay, do—didn't I lose enough, this night, without lavin' the doore open, for more o' yez to go; but first take an' sprinkle a dust o' the holy waters over ye, acushla, and bring it here till I throw a taste iv it over myself and the craythurs; an' I wondher, Nell, you'd forget to do the like yourself, lettin' the craythurs out so near nightfall. Come here and sit on my knees, asthora, come to me, mavourneen, and hould me fast, in the name o' God, and I'll hould you fast that none can take yez from me, and tell me all about it, and what it was—the Lord between us and harm—an' how it happened, and who was in it."

And the door being barred, the two children, sometimes speaking together, often interrupting one another, often interrupted by their mother, managed to tell this strange story, which I had better relate connectedly and in my own language.

The Widow Ryan's three children were playing, as I have said, upon the narrow old road in front of her door. Little Bill or Leum, about five years old, with golden hair and large blue eyes, was a very pretty boy, with all the clear tints of healthy childhood, and that gaze of earnest simplicity which belongs not to town children of the same age. His little sister Peg, about

a year elder, and his brother Con, a little more than a year elder than she, made up the little group.

Under the great old ash-trees, whose last leaves were falling at their feet, in the light of an October sunset, they were playing with the hilarity and eagerness of rustic children, clamouring together, and their faces were turned toward the west and the storied hill of Lisnavoura.

Suddenly a startling voice with a screech called to them from behind, ordering them to get out of the way, and turning, they saw a sight, such as they never beheld before. It was a carriage drawn by four horses that were pawing and snorting, in impatience, as if just pulled up. The children were almost under their feet, and scrambled to the side of the road next their own door.

This carriage and all its appointments were old-fashioned and gorgeous, and presented to the children, who had never seen anything finer than a turf-car, and once, an old chaise that passed that way from Killoe, a spectacle perfectly dazzling.

Here was antique splendour. The harness and trappings were scarlet, and blazing with gold. The horses were huge, and snow white, with great manes, that as they tossed and shook them in the air, seemed to stream and float sometimes longer and sometimes shorter, like so much smoke—their tails were long, and tied up in bows of broad scarlet and gold ribbon. The coach itself was glowing with colours, gilded and emblazoned. There were footmen behind in gay liveries, and three-cocked hats, like the coachman's; but he had a great wig, like a judge's, and their hair was frizzed out and powdered, and a long thick "pigtail," with a bow to it, hung down the back of each.

All these servants were diminutive, and ludicrously out of proportion with the enormous horses of the equipage, and had sharp, sallow features, and small, restless, fiery eyes, and faces of cunning and malice that chilled the children. The little coachman was scowling and showing his white fangs under his cocked-hat, and his little blazing beads of eyes were quivering with fury in their sockets as he whirled his whip round and round over their heads, till the lash of it looked like a streak of fire in the evening sun, and sounded like the cry of a legion of "fillapouees" in the air.

"Stop the princess on the highway!" cried the coachman, in a piercing treble.

"Stop the princess on the highway!" piped each footman in turn, scowling over his shoulder down on the children, and grinding his keen teeth.

The children were so frightened they could only gape and turn white in their panic. But a very sweet voice from the open window of the carriage reassured them, and arrested the attack of the lackeys. A beautiful and "very grand-looking" lady was smiling from it on them, and they all felt pleased in the strange light of that smile.

"The boy with the golden hair, I think," said the lady, bending her large and wonderfully clear eyes on little Leum.

The upper sides of the carriage were chiefly of glass, so that the children could see another woman inside, whom they did not like so well.

This was a black woman, with a wonderfully long neck, hung round with many strings of large variously-coloured beads, and on her head was a sort of turban of silk, striped with all the colours of the rainbow, and fixed in it was a golden star.

This black woman had a face as thin almost as a death's-head, with high cheek-bones, and great goggle eyes, the whites of which, as well as her wide range of teeth, showed in brilliant contrast with her skin, as she looked over the beautiful lady's shoulder, and whispered something in her ear.

"Yes; the boy with the golden hair, I think," repeated the lady.

And her voice sounded sweet as a silver bell in the children's ears, and her smile beguiled them like the light of an enchanted lamp, as she leaned from the window, with a look of ineffable fondness on the golden-haired boy, with the large blue eyes; insomuch that little Billy, looking up, smiled in return with a wondering fondness, and when she stooped down, and stretched her jewelled arms towards him, he stretched his little hands up, and how they touched the other children did not know; but, saying, "Come and give me a kiss, my darling," she raised him, and he seemed to ascend in her small fingers as lightly as a feather, and she held him in her lap and covered him with kisses.

Nothing daunted, the other children would have been only too happy to change places with their favoured little brother. There was only one thing that was unpleasant, and a little frightened them, and that was the black woman, who stood and stretched forward, in the carriage as before.

She gathered a rich silk and gold handkerchief that was in her fingers up to her lips, and seemed to thrust ever so much of it, fold after fold, into her capacious mouth, as they thought to smother her laughter, with which she seemed convulsed, for she was shaking and quivering, as it seemed, with suppressed merriment; but her eyes, which remained uncovered, looked angrier than they had ever seen eyes look before.

But the lady was so beautiful they looked on her instead, and she continued to caress and kiss the little boy on her knee; and smiling at the other children she held up a large russet apple in her fingers, and the carriage began to move slowly on, and with a nod inviting them to take the fruit, she dropped it on the road from the window; it rolled some way beside the wheels, they following, and then she dropped another, and then another, and so on. And the same thing happened to all; for just as either of the children who ran beside had caught the rolling apple, somehow it slipped into a hole or ran into a ditch, and looking up they saw the lady drop another from the window, and so the chase was taken up and continued till they got, hardly knowing how far they had gone, to the old cross-road that leads to Owney. It seemed that there the horses' hoofs and carriage wheels rolled up a wonderful dust, which being caught in one of those eddies that whirl the dust up into a column, on the calmest day, enveloped the children for a moment, and passed whirling on towards Lisnavoura, the carriage, as they fancied, driving in the centre of it; but suddenly it subsided, the straws and leaves floated to the ground, the dust dissipated itself, but the white horses and the lackeys, the gilded carriage, the lady and their little golden haired brother were gone.

At the same moment suddenly the upper rim of the clear setting sun disappeared behind the hill of Knockdoula, and it was twilight. Each child felt the transition like a shock—and the sight of the rounded summit of Lisnavoura, now closely overhanging them, struck them with a new fear.

They screamed their brother's name after him, but their cries were lost in the vacant air. At the same time they thought they heard a hollow voice say, close to them, "Go home."

Looking round and seeing no one, they were scared, and hand in hand—the little girl crying wildly, and the boy white as ashes, from fear—they trotted homeward,

at their best speed, to tell, as we have seen, their strange story.

Molly Ryan never more saw her darling. But something of the lost little boy was seen by his former playmates.

Sometimes when their mother was away earning a trifle at hay-making, and Nelly washing the potatoes for their dinner, or "beatling" clothes in the little stream that flows in the hollow close by, they saw the pretty face of little Billy peeping in archly at the door, and smiling silently at them, and as they ran to embrace him, with cries of delight, he drew back, still smiling archly, and when they got out into the open day, he was gone, and they could see no trace of him anywhere.

This happened often, with slight variations in the circumstances of the visit. Sometimes he would peep for a longer time, sometimes for a shorter time, sometimes his little hand would come in, and, with bended finger, beckon them to follow; but always he was smiling with the same arch look and wary silence—and always he was gone when they reached the door. Gradually these visits grew less and less frequent, and in about eight months they ceased altogether, and little Billy, irretrievably lost, took rank in their memories with the dead.

One wintry morning, nearly a year and a half after his disappearance, their mother having set out for Limerick soon after cock-crow, to sell some fowl at the market, the little girl, lying by the side of her elder sister, who was fast asleep, just at the grey of the morning heard the latch lifted softly, and saw little Billy enter and close the door gently after him. There was light enough to see that he was barefoot and ragged, and looked pale and famished. He went straight to the fire, and cowered over the turf embers, and rubbed his hands slowly, and seemed to shiver as he gathered the smouldering turf together.

The little girl clutched her sister in terror and whispered,

"Waken, Nelly, waken; here's Billy come back!"

Nelly slept soundly on, but the little boy, whose hands were extended close over the coals, turned and looked toward the bed, it seemed to her, in fear, and she saw the glare of the embers reflected on his thin cheek as he turned toward her. He rose and went, on tiptoe, quickly to the door, in silence, and let himself out as softly as he had come in.

After that, the little boy was never seen more by any one of his kindred.

"Fairy doctors," as the dealers in the preternatural, who in such cases were called in, are termed, did all that in them lay—but in vain. Father Tom came down, and tried what holier rites could do, but equally without result. So little Billy was dead to mother, brother, and sisters; but no grave received him. Others whom affection cherished, lay in holy ground, in the old church-yard of Abington, with headstone to mark the spot over which the survivor might kneel and say a kind prayer for the peace of the departed soul. But there was no landmark to show where little Billy was hidden from their loving eyes, unless it was in the old hill of Lisnavoura, that cast its long shadow at sunset before the cabin-door; or that, white and filmy in the moonlight, in later years, would occupy his brother's gaze as he returned from fair or market, and draw from him a sigh and a prayer for the little brother he had lost so long ago, and was never to see again.

THE GLENGILLODRAM PLOUGHING MATCH.

THERE are only two public events in the course of the year that stir the community of the glen in its length and breadth. One is the Cattle Show,* the other is the Ploughing Match. Glengillodram is famous for cattle, and is equally famous for peerless ploughmen.

The ploughing match occurs in the late autumn, when ways are dank and daylight is brief. As the homely placard on the kirk-yard gate informs us, "the ploughs must be on the ground by eight A.M.," at which hour, the December dawn in our northern latitude has done little more than make the landscape dimly visible. "The ground" one finds to be a large field of even grass land marked off into narrow sections by a number of small wooden pins, with a straight furrow drawn along at either end, leaving a narrow margin outside.

Forty ploughs are to compete; and here, to be sure, they are—forty pairs of plump spirited farm horses, groomed in the highest style of art, some with gaudy ribbons worked into their tails and manes, and all with plough harness polished as if the most expert of shoeblacks had done his best upon it.

Once, on a spring day journey by the

London and North-Western Railway, I set myself to reckon up from the carriage window the diversities that might occur, as we passed on, in the style of team used to do the ploughing going on at that busy season. In the course of the journey from London to Warrington, the varieties that presented themselves were amusing. Here, were two horses abreast in the traces, with one leader in front; there, were two leaders in front, and one behind, and then three abreast. Next, three in single file, four in single file, and at last five in single file. Generally, too, it was the wooden plough; and invariably there was one man to manage the plough, and another, or a lad, to drive the team. With the Scottish ploughman it is altogether different. The plough is uniformly drawn by a single pair of horses walking abreast, and the ploughman both guides his plough and drives his team without any assistant. And it must needs be said that his ploughing wears a far more workmanlike look than the zigzag uneven furrows cut by his English brother of the old school: who yet adheres to the numerous team and the antiquated wooden plough.

But the Glengillodram field is now in motion. The forty ploughs have all started, or are starting. They plough in sections, or ridges, of about a furlong in length. At the outset, every ploughman has to cut his "feirin" furrow in the line of the small wooden pins. With what a serious air each competitor bends himself to his task, and how quietly and steadily the well-in-hand teams pull forward! The ploughman has no guide but his eye, closely fixed on the line of pins before him; yet when the other end of the field has been reached by the man we watch, we see that he has drawn a furrow which, if not in the mathematical sense a straight line, is yet so remarkably straight that the eye can detect neither bend nor wrinkle in its whole length. And to be successful in the competition, he must cut every one of the thirty or forty furrows he has to plough equally straight. Nor is that the only requisite. Equality in depth of furrow is one condition of success; equality in width, is another; and not less indispensable are evenness in "packing" the furrows against each other, and neatness in turning out the last narrow strip when the ridge has been pared down, furrow by furrow, till only a mere thread of green runs from end to end of the field.

As the ploughing goes on, the spectators

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. iii., p. 36.

accumulate. They are not allowed to wander over the field, but they traverse its margin, and closely inspect the progress of the work. Here are the crack ploughmen of the parish: men who knock under to nobody: save in this way, that this year you may beat me, but next year I shall hope to beat you; here are less experienced aspirants, who look forward to a good time coming, when they also shall wear the blue ribbon of their order; here, too, are men of humbler ambition, who yet hope to win a place of some sort among the dozen of prizemen; and a sprinkling as well of rollicking blades who have never been troubled about the high honours of the day, and some of whom are swinging on with the determination to let it be seen that they can plough, if not as well, at least as quickly, as any of their contemporaries.

We find attention strongly centred upon two competitors, whom we quickly come to know as Sandy Macnab and Rory Mearison (if the reader be skilled in comparative philology he will be able to translate the last of the two names into Roderick Morison). They are the champion ploughmen of the parish. After a hard struggle, Rory gained his position as champion, and for several years wore his laurels almost undisturbed, but of late the honours of this veteran have been repeatedly put in jeopardy by his younger rival. And now, as the grizzled, weather-beaten man of fifty steps warily on, with firm hold of his plough-handles, while the pair of sleek handsome bays in front are obedient to his softest whisper, we hear the exclamation: "Eh, mon, but he's makin' bonny wark!" But so, too, is Sandy Macnab. And by-and-bye the remark becomes frequent that if Sandy "dinna spoil himsel' wi' his mids, he is maist sure to get it." The "mids," or finishing furrow, is critical. Rory evidently sees it, gets nervous toward the close of his task, and—poor man!—to his chagrin comes in as second prizeman; for the judges who are let loose on the land as soon as the ploughs are off, point at certain small patches of green surface which he has not turned perfectly down, and award the first prize to Sandy Macnab. "Ah, but Rory was a gran' ploughman, though his han's growin' no sae steady noo," says my sympathising neighbour to his friend; and his friend re-echoes the statement with a long narration of Rory's bygone exploits.

The ploughing match proper is now finished, and the subordinate competition

—for which only part of the teams present enter—to decide who has the "best-groomed horses and the best-kept harness," comes next. This competition awakens but a limited amount of interest, compared with the other, inasmuch as it is felt that success in it depends only in part on the ploughman's skill and attention, and in part on the quality of the horses and harness due to the taste or means of the ploughman's master. And so, while the teams depart by this and the other route homeward, the newly-ploughed field continues to be the subject of minute critical inspection. The gathering of onlookers appears to be mainly from the class of ploughmen, or "day labourers," rather than the class of farmers, though there are a few of the latter, just as one or two farmers' sons have entered the lists as competing ploughmen. Generally the spectators are of the order who have had, or expect yet to have, personal experience in walking at the plough-tail. They are of all ages, too: from mere lads to old men bent double by hard toil with spade and pickaxe: and all keenly discuss the doings of the ploughmen with the confidence of those who know what they are talking about. I note particularly one firmly-knit young fellow, with keen grey eyes, rather sprucely dressed in a tweed suit, with shiny leather leggings. He is evidently not a ploughman, and yet he is volubly, and even somewhat dictatorially, pronouncing upon the ploughing to a group of rustics, some of whom endeavour to combat certain of his opinions with not much apparent success. Who can he be? And the query is promptly met. "Oh, it's Tammy Grant." "But who is Tammy Grant?" "Weel," quoth my intelligent and never-failing friend, through whose agency I am here, "he is just the son o' a labourin' man o' the glen. He was a ploughman here himsel' three year ago, an', for his years, a lad o' extraordinary promise. But he was aye fond o' books, an' drew aside wi' nane mair than the dominie. So ye wouldna' hin'er Tammy to gi'e up the plough stils, an', aifter a brush up at the parish skule, gae aff to the college to study for the ministry." And I found it even so. Tammy Grant, who was entered of his second year as a student at Aberdeen University, was home for the Christmas vacation, and spending a day with evident zest among his old associates at their wonted employment.

It is not to be supposed that the ploughing match can pass by, without affording some opportunity for social enjoyment.

The dinner on this occasion is a mere private affair. The farmer who has got his field ploughed, will, it is understood, bear the cost of dinner for the judges and such of his neighbours as he chooses to invite: as well as the cost of a light luncheon, consisting of "bread an' cheese, an' a dram," to the ploughmen; but the crowning entertainment is the Ploughman's Ball in the evening.

For the ball, tickets are not required, nor are special invitations necessary. Indeed, the stranger, of decent social standing, who should pass the night in the glen and not attend the ball, would be reckoned no better than an unfriendly churl. And thus, when the business of my lawful calling has led me there, why should not I, too, partake of the pleasures going! For years on years, I understand, the ball has taken place at the elder's farm, and for the good reason that the elder has a large granary, extremely well adapted for the purpose, which he cheerfully clears out and garnishes for the occasion, while he makes it an invariable rule—unless the laird happen to be there—to open the dance in person, with the most mature matron present.

Nine o'clock has come, and a dozen candles in tin sconces light up the spacious granary, around the side-walls of which are ranged "the youth and beauty of the district," as the local newspapers will inform their readers in due season. Among some scores of sturdy lads, I recognise sundry of the competing ploughmen, not omitting the veteran Rory Meerison, who appears to have plucked up his spirits wonderfully. (I understand Rory claims reflected credit as the prime instructor of the man who has this day beaten him.) And he has been at double pains, despite the result of the contest, in combing out his grey whiskers and setting his very high, and very stiff, shirt collar. But, indeed, the gentlemen are all in their "Sunday best," and each has his buxom partner by his side, set off in the nearest practicable approach to her ideal of ball-room style. A sprinkling of the men wear the kilt and plaid, and we number among these the hero of the day, Sandy Macnab, and Tammy Grant, the embryo parson, who affords us indisputable evidence that he is a sound disciple of the school of muscular Christians. A very few of the women affect the tartan too; but the greater part seem to have studied less the material of their dresses than how to achieve a sufficiently violent contrast in colours.

At the end of the granary, on a raised

seat, are a couple of fiddlers, and near by them a solemn-looking kilted piper. Screech-screech-screech! The fiddles are in tune, and the floor is filled with waiting dancers. The gentlemen range themselves by their partners, on tiptoe, to begin: when the leading fiddler pushes his fourth finger far up his first string, and brings down his bow with a long-drawn squeak. This is "kissing time;" and, after an attempt more or less successful on the part of each male dancer to kiss his partner's cheek, at it they go! The fiddlers dash into a stirring "Strathspey," and the dancers dance with a will. Reels, "foursome reels," and "eightsome reels," are the staple dances. To face your partner, and dance your "steps" at will, keeping time to the music, and to describe the figure 8 on the floor when a change of position is required, is all the skill needed to make a passable appearance, although the more elaborate style of not a few on the floor would seem to speak of the assiduous professional services of the rustic dancing-master. And now, the musicians change their strain, and give us "quick time," and the dancers become doubly energetic, and the scene becomes doubly animated: the gentlemen taking the change of time as the signal to snap their thumbs rapidly above their heads, and utter a wild "hooch!" Five minutes have passed in this exercise, and the fiddlers pause; some of the gentlemen lead their partners back to their seats, but the greater part of them, and some of the ladies, have a second set-to after exactly the same fashion. And thus the dance goes on. While some are speedily danced out of breath, the energy and vivacity of the younger ploughmen seem only to increase as they urge on the hard-worked fiddlers, and caper through the "eightsome" figure with louder "hooch-hooch's!" than before.

By twelve o'clock all moderate dancers own to some fatigue, and the excellent elder who moves about, now here, now there, as a highly efficient master of the ceremonies, enters his emphatic protest against the efforts of a few of the more boisterous lads to pull reluctant or tired-out people on the floor.

"Come, blow up, Alister," cries the elder, "an' lat's hae the reel o' Thuilachan. Tammy, get them to the flure."

Forthwith Tammy Grant, dressed, as has been said, in kilt and plaid of the tartan of his clan, picks out three other young fellows wearing "the garb of old Gaul," and one of whom is Sandy Macnab.

Alister the piper, who for the last hour or two has been looking the indignation he feels at the delay that has occurred in calling the native instrument into use, blows up his "chanter" with an air of grave superiority; his "drone" grunts, and grunts again, and at the first wild note that rends the air, the four dancers bow to the ladies of the company, and are off, with the picturesque "Highland fling," into the reel of Thuilachan, which they keep up for the next eight or ten minutes with amazing vigour and skill, while the granary rings from floor to roof with the "skirl" of Alister's bagpipes. The dance ends amid loud acclamations, and there is a general desire to have it repeated. Human limbs and human lungs have a limit to their power, however, and cannot keep it up at this rate. Yet as the four best dancers have just left the floor, there is some difficulty in getting others to succeed them; and after a brief pause they dance the reel again in a more moderate style by way of encore. Then, to gratify the company (and not less to gratify the piper, who is jealous of his reputation as a skilled musician), Tammy Grant consents to dance the Ghillie Callum, over a pair of crossed walking sticks, in place of the traditional crossed swords.

While Ghillie Callum is going on, the elder has disappeared. His duties are multifarious. The time for refreshments has now come; and none but the elder can rightly concoct the toddy. The elder believes in wooden implements for the purpose. Ah! if you but saw the neat little ladles, fashioned of wild cherry tree, with ebony handles, which the worthy man has for private use when his friends are met round his hospitable board! The present is a public, and, so to speak, wholesale, occasion. Therefore there must be a large vessel for mixing, and the elder insists on the use of the wooden bushel measure. Into the bushel he shovels a heap of sugar; and then a "grey beard" jar of the "real Glengillodram mountain dew" is emptied in. Then, water, at boiling point, from the huge copper over the glowing peat fire on the kitchen hearth. And the elder bends him over the steaming bushel, stirs the toddy with a zeal and knowledge all his own, and has it fully tested and proved by the aid of two or three trusted cronies: a second grey beard being hard at hand to supply what may be lacking to give it the desiderated "grip."

Tin pitchers, delft mugs, and crystal jugs, are indifferently called into use for conveying the elder's mixture to the ball-room, where a band of active stewards are

speedily at work, handing about supplies of crisp oat cakes and cheese, along with the toddy, which is freely served out to all. Yet let it not be supposed that we drink of it to drunkenness. In the keen air of this upland region, toddy is justly reckoned a kindly liquor, which by itself it never fully breaks a man's character for sobriety; we drink of it on that clear understanding.

The hour of refreshment past, dancing is resumed with renewed vigour. By-and-bye some of the more staid heads in the company find opportunities for slipping home to bed; but the flower of the youth and beauty, who deem the Ploughing Match Ball an entertainment peculiarly their own, keep the fiddlers going till three or four o'clock in the morning, when the ball breaks up, and the gentlemen gallantly see their lady partners home. And if the intensity of their enjoyment be not sufficiently marked by the lateness of the hour to which it is protracted, it ought to be by the fact that almost every one of those who have danced on until then will have to commence another day of hard manual labour, within a couple of hours after leaving the ball-room.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

A YACHTING STORY.

CHAPTER XII. IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

The gentlemen now came up, advancing on the ladies in the usual disorderly open skirmishing, as it were, creeping from bush to bush and chair to chair.

Mr. Conway went over to Jessica. "You set me down finely at dinner, and before all the public, too. Was it not cruel, heartless?"

A look of pain came into her face. "You always appear to like taking this bantering tone with me. It seems a little unkind. It is certainly contemptuous. You either dislike, or despise me."

There was something, he thought, strangely attractive in this girl—something he had not met before, and was new to him, "man of the world" as he was. He became natural and genuine at once. "One has to put on a speech and manner for company like a dress suit. Shall I own it? You saw what were my real thoughts. They were with you in all you said; and I cannot tell you how I admire your spirit. I am, indeed, with you; and if you impose, as penance, that I should make public retraction——"

Her face lit up, and filled with a sort of glowing enthusiasm. She had half put

out her hand; then drew it back, blushing. This bit of nature gave that experienced judge, the Hon. George Conway, more delight than anything of human nature he had met in the whole course of his travels. "I knew you would be on the side of what was generous—the side of honour and charity. I know of course what would be said of my taking up this little cause, that it is from jealousy of Miss Panton. You may think so; but I trust not." This she said wistfully. He answered eagerly:

"I believe no such thing. I seem to have known Miss Jessica Bailey for years, and have seen enough of her to admire nearly everything she does."

Jessica's cheek flushed with pleasure. "What, you say this to me—not as a compliment, a formula?"

"I scorn such things, or keep them for such as are worth nothing. I tell you this frankly, Miss Bailey; I have met none like you, and never dreamed of meeting any like you. You have changed a view I held about women. Indeed, I almost blush to think why I came here. You would think very low of me were I to tell you. I thought of 'amusing myself,' as it is called, of enjoying a 'flirtation,' to use that odious word. There was something in you that attracted me at first, but you will never forgive me after this unless——"

Forgive! There seemed to be nothing unforgiving in those eyes of delight and enjoyment. "Only tell me that you think higher and more worthily of me, now that you know me better. It would delight me to hear that from you."

"I could not tell you here what I think," said Conway, in a low voice. This was one of those moments when even the most trained and watchful "man of the world" is thrown off his guard. He hardly knew what he was going to say, when a voice sounded beside them and made both almost start.

She spoke pettishly and bitterly. "I suppose attacking me. You must not mind *her*, Mr. Conway. Every one in this place knows what she thinks of me. She is the radical of this place. But you sided with me to-day, and I knew you would." And she looked triumphantly at Jessica.

The latter smiled, and turned to Conway with a curious look that seemed to say, "Now is the time to give a proof of repentance." He felt he must get on his sackcloth, even to save his credit.

"It behaved deceitfully," he said. "It was only a sham fight. I wished to hear how Miss Bailey would argue her case."

"Oh, you side with her, then. You throw *me* over?"

He laughed. "Really this is such a strange atmosphere of St. Arthur's, I can't understand it. The visitor finds himself called on to choose his side. Two charming young ladies head each a different party, and not about dresses or politics, but about an iron bridge."

"Only about principle, the principle that divides rich and poor, strong and weak, and which is being fought out all over the world. William Tell would not bow to a cap on a pole. Yet the cap, pole, and bow together stood for subjection or freedom."

"Jessica is wonderful at history and Mangnall's Questions. She got the prizes at school," said the young hostess spitefully.

"I never like to think of my school days," said Jessica, looking at her steadily. "But you will mind Mr. Conway more than me, and he will tell you that this is an inconsiderate and an imprudent step, possibly a cruel one."

"Yes," said Conway, gravely, "I *was* a little hasty. I would let the poor souls bring their sandwiches and beer a little longer. It is very inconvenient to become unpopular."

"Then I'll never speak to you again," the heiress said; "and before a week is over, papa's workmen will have taken it away. She—Jessica—Miss Bailey, has been telling her philosophy to you. But wait until you hear my story."

Then she turned and walked away abruptly. Jessica looked after her with triumph. "That was noble on your part," she said, "and indeed I appreciate it! Other men would not have had the courage. I admire you. Now we are friends indeed! There are creatures in this place who abase themselves before wealth, and meanly put the foot that walks upon vast landed estates, upon their heads. There's a fine flourish," she added, laughing.

He was more and more attracted by her curious character. He drew closer to her. "I disdain praise which is not deserved. What would you say if I was as bad as the local character you have so graphically described? What would you say if I was one of those who had come here to lift that foot upon my head? What would you say to a man who came here like some careless speculator, too lazy to be eager, but willing, if something turned up, to pick it up? Some would call it 'fortune-hunter.'"

"Never," said Jessica, warmly. "As

well convince me that a crimson curtain is yellow! No; but I will tell you something out of my wisdom. You find some attraction in that rich girl besides her riches."

Conway started: "Miss Jessica Bailey is not turning fortune-teller. Here is my unworthy palm."

"I know that light way of putting serious things aside is thought fashionable; yet, I would be a fortune-teller so far, and say she cannot understand you. She has lived all for herself."

"I seem to have known you long; I know not why. It seems to me as though I had been seeking some one, and I know not how, but in this room I *seem to have found* at last what I seek. It may be but a tone of mind—a humour. You will let me ask you, consult you. You will answer me?"

Now the colour flushed into her face, now it ebbed away. Then it came again. All this was the garden of a new and exquisite Paradise thrown open to her. Now she looked around, then at him quickly, smiling, and scarcely knowing what she did. "Oh, you mean this," she murmured. "Oh, unjust I was! How unkind of me, and how good of you."

"But that answer to my question," he said, reflectively. "Ah, I wonder what that will be?"

Eagerly she answered: "Ah, you cannot doubt it."

There was no shyness, no restraint. The delight and enthusiasm of her hitherto restrained nature broke through all barriers.

"Yes," he went on, "I may at last find at St. Arthur's what I have so long sought. You know what that is; and, yet, how can I tell? Who knows what issue there may be to all this? And I may have to raise the anchor and sail away sullenly and listlessly as I came. I have met so many checks, so many chills."

"It shall not come from me—no, never!" she said, almost aloud, then stopped in the utmost confusion.

The company were rising to go away. Doctor Bailey came up to "drag away" his daughter, and in a very ill humour indeed. With the rumour of Lord Formanton coming, it was necessary that he should, as it were, "prime" Mr. Conway, prepare the ground, &c.; and here was the witless girl, interfering with her childish talk, "taking up" the time and wasting a golden opportunity. "Come away, come away, child; don't keep me all night," was the rude challenge that wakened up the pair.

As the guests dropped slowly away, the two girls said "good night." There was a mingled air of nervous distrust, uncertainty, and dislike in Miss Pantton's look, as it were, putting the question, "What have you done or arranged this night?" a question that was answered by the other's air of elation and perfect happiness.

When all had departed, there were left the hostess and her cousin Dudley, she lying back on the sofa, with a worn and dissatisfied look. Her spaniel—for such he was—approached her deferentially. "You are worried," he said, "about something. Tell me what you wish done."

"Nothing that you can do. You saw that low girl's air of triumph as she went off, all because she took possession of Conway, my admirer—she and her scheming father."

"He is not worthy a thought," he said, in a low voice. "A mere roving Philanderer."

"Who?" she said, starting up: "Conway? What can you know of him? Oh, you know well that is false."

"He is not worthy of a single thought of yours, at all events."

"Why?"

"Because he has let himself be regularly taken in, as they call it. That parson's daughter, so simple as she affects to be—"

"Tell me what you mean," she said, now standing up, "and don't excite me."

"There is nothing to be excited about, indeed," he said, hurriedly. "More to laugh at. Who would care what became of a man that would choose in that way!"

"And he *has*. What, that girl entrap him, too, and in this house! Oh, insolent! How intolerable, and *how* cruel. But one can laugh at it, as you say."

"It is true. I heard it myself; and he only waits to see his father. But he would not hear of such a thing."

"It was hatred and malignancy," went on the young girl, walking up and down. "She came to this house on purpose. It was to insult *me*. I, that could buy and sell her a thousand times. But wait—wait a little, Dudley. She has not stolen her booty yet."

"No," said Dudley, excitedly. "I can manage *him* for you at any moment."

"That is you all over," she said, scornfully. "You think everything is to be done by violence, blows, and thrashings. Oh, but to deal with her. How am I to hinder her? With all my money, too, and estates,

a wretched parson's girl can do as she pleases, and scoff at me."

"Well, only wait," repeated Dudley—"wait a little, then we shall see."

CHAPTER XIII. FOOD FOR THE GOSSIPS.

HE left her sitting there, looking into the fire, beating her hands impatiently. "Only wait." How easily that speech is made. Yet, it is the lever that moves everything—the earth itself. Time, in short, says, "I will help you. Give me your arm." But we turn impatient from that hobbling old dotard: with our hearts in a whirl, boiling and yeasting, we must rush on, or sink down and die—at least, we think so. Waiting has the air of indifference—indifference suggests power and other store of resources—which air piques the bystander and makes *him* impatient.

As they were getting their hats and coats in the hall, a hoarse voice said to Conway: "I want to go back with you, Conway—something to say to you."

"With all my heart," said the other; "I'll give you a seat." Conway had his own "trap," and drove himself. Dudley, who had made the offer, sat beside him and did not speak for some time. Between the two men there had been some coolness, more instinctive than grounded on any real offence; for Conway was "bored" with his glowering looks and his growling manners, and general discontent.

"Look here, Conway," he said, at last; "I was watching you to-night, and I've made up my mind to speak plainly to you."

"But I have made up my mind not to listen to plain speaking. It is always disagreeable."

"Oh, you are ready and free enough with a speech any day, I admit that. But I tell you what, I see your double game, and one at least you sha'n't play, and I won't have it."

"This is really plain speaking. Well!"

"I won't, I can't, have it. Don't I see, don't we all see, how you are hanging between those two girls? You are so tickled because you think you have made an impression on both; you can't make up your mind to come forward and say what you mean, or leave this place like an honest man."

"This is a very strange way of speaking to me, Dudley," said Conway, haughtily. "What should my affairs be to you, whether I ought to go or stay? I should be the last person in the world to think of directing your movements."

"No man has done that yet. But see here. You know I *am* rough, but what I

say roughly is only what other men mean, but can say more smoothly. Leave that girl, do. It is an unfair advantage. She has been brought up here, in these backwoods, like a child, like a girl in the fairy tales; and if she have her whim, even for a time, it must be gratified; you know that, as well as I do, and it is not fair to take advantage of it."

"We had better stop this," said Conway, "our acquaintance is slight——"

"But not mine with her. I am as much to her as her brother, or her father. I tell you again it is not fair, it's shabby. They all know here what your design is, and what you and your people would be glad to carry out. I know it, and hear more things at a distance than you suspect. I say it is shabby, as I saw you doing to-night, playing off those two girls against each other, so as to get both profit and amusement out of the business."

Conway almost drew up his horse, and stopped his trap. "This is a very strange tone, Mr. Dudley," he said, "and I must beg you will not trouble me with any advice or concern in my affairs. I do not allow it even from members of my own family."

"I am glad you take this tone, because now I can speak plainly as to what I will not allow—as to her. Oh, don't think that I don't know a great deal of these dandy tricks, carrying on with that Bailey's daughter, affecting to be on her side, and her superior wisdom—I suppose laughing at that poor girl's little fancies—and then passing over to *her*. Her fortune would come in very usefully to repair the walls of Formanton. Wait, you must listen. Here is the town, so you may as well. I don't want to be offensive, but to speak out plainly, and I warn you in time, I will not have her sacrificed, and I tell you, in time, you shall not do it."

"I suppose being in a man's carriage is like being under one's roof, and there is a certain duty of hospitality involved. Still I am very glad you have taken up this tone, as it will clear the ground considerably. I may speak as plainly as you have done to me."

"Precisely what I should like."

"Well, then, I must tell you that the very fact of your giving such warnings, orders, or whatever you may call them, would be enough, actually enough, to make me continue as I was, persevere in exactly the same course. As a man of the world you surely must see this."

"You refuse, then? Take care!"

"Give me some reason, then! What is

your office of protector to this young lady? Why should you interfere where she and her father do not? You surely give me credit for more sense than to suppose I could pay any attention to such threats? Explain it to me."

"I can explain nothing, except that she is too innocent and holy a creature to be made either a mere player in a game, whether another woman is to be the winner, or to be flung away, a sacrifice on the altar of a mercenary marriage. Yes, Conway, out of the world as I am, I have friends who are well informed, who let me know the rumours and the stories."

"Rumours—stories! This is intolerable! Mr. Dudley, I request you will not interfere with me any more. That answer is final. I have noticed your manner all through—your looks and interference, both to-night and on other occasions. I have spoken reasonably with you, and asked for some justification. You decline to give it. Well, then, I decline to take any notice of your demand."

They were now down by the club-house door, all lit up, and Conway pulled up sharply. "I suppose you will get down here," he said; "and I think it will be for the best that we should not come back to this subject. I give and take always. I shall not venture to interfere with you, but you must not with me."

The door of the club was open, and two or three gentlemen were standing in the blaze of light smoking. Conway jumped down, and walked round by the side of the club to the little pier where the boats landed. Dudley had got down more quickly, and standing at the top of the steps barred the way.

"This will not do, Conway. You must not go to-night before you promise me. Or, better still, go on board now, weigh anchor, sail away, and help your family in some other fashion."

Conway laughed loudly. "I am not mad yet," he said. "This amuses me."

"How dare you laugh at me!" said the other, furiously, and advancing on him: "What do you mean? Don't think you shall insult me, though you can girls. What if I don't let you pass this night?"

Conway began to think he was mad, but his behaviour was logical enough.

"This all passes the limits of forbearance. I have my men below at the boat, and in one second I shall call them. I warn you, change your behaviour—for the last time.

Stand out of my way, please. Here, Benson, get this gentleman to leave the way clear."

A large hand gripped Dudley's arm and thrust him back from the steps. In an instant he had shaken himself clear.

"You dare set your fellows on me! Take that!" And in a second he was flinging himself on Conway. But the latter was prepared. Always active, he sprang back, and catching Dudley by the collar, deliberately flung him back. The stones were slippery, there was no railing, and the unlucky Dudley went over into the shallow water.

The club gentlemen came running up at the splash, windows were thrown open—the boat was only a yard off, and he was had out in a twinkling.

"My God!" cried Doctor Bailey, always judicious, "keep them apart, or there will be bloodshed. Fetch him out, bring a rope some one—the man will be drowned!"

All this while "the man" was out of the water, standing up, shaking himself, and trying to clear the spray from his eyes.

"Where is he?" he said, rather wildly: "let me see him!" But Benson, the mate, had him by the arm.

"That won't do, master."

"I did not mean that," said Conway, in a loud voice. "And I wish all who have seen the matter to understand that it was quite an accident." With that he walked down the steps into his boat, and was pulled away to his yacht.

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